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National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI) on crime statistics. There are different challenges that affect crime statistics at the national and international levels, including the development of standard concepts and definitions, the lack of coordination among national institutions and different data sources, and the lack of an international framework to classify data on conventional and complex crimes. The Statistical Commission is invited to discuss actions to be taken by the various actors of the international statistical system, being national statistical offices or international and regional organizations, to overcome these challenges. Issues that will be discussed include: (a) the strategies to be adopted by national statistical offices to better coordinate the collection, dissemination and analysis of crime data; (b) the increased role of victimization surveys; (c) the measurement of emerging and "difficult-to-measure" crimes, such as organized crime, corruption and trafficking in persons; (d) the development of an international crime classification framework to improve the comparability of data within and across countries; (e) the establishment of the INEGI-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information on Governance, Victims of Crime, Public Security and Justice; and (f) the first international conference on crime statistics.

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Report of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico on crime statistics

I. Introduction

1. Levels of crime and violence are among the biggest threats to the stability and development of countries. They affect critical aspects of the daily living of citizens and they often have high priority in the agenda of policymakers. Fighting crime, managing prevention programmes and promoting security require a comprehensive statistical system that can provide the evidence to monitor the levels and trends of all forms of crime and their impact on the affected entities. In many countries, however, statistical systems on crime are still facing important challenges in providing high-quality statistical data on trends and patterns of crime.

2. In order to meet such challenges successfully, action is needed at both the national and international levels, where national statistical offices should play a stronger role. The present report identifies a number of challenges and possible actions to further enhance the quality of statistical data on crime. It builds on the report on statistics on drugs, drug use and crime, submitted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to the forty-first session of the Statistical Commission (E/CN.3/2010/19) and a number of resolutions adopted by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Economic and Social Council by which Member States were invited to strengthen their efforts to review and improve data-collection tools in order to enhance knowledge on world crime trends and patterns.[1] It also takes into account the conclusions of the Expert Group Meeting on the Scope and Content of Social Statistics (ESA/STAT/AC.161/L.6) held in New York in 2008.

II. Data collection on crime and criminal justice at the national level

3. Despite the high relevance and political sensitivity of the topic of crime and criminal justice, national statistical offices have often been involved only marginally in the development and maintenance of a crime statistical system. As with other sector statistics (such as health or education), data on crime have traditionally been based on administrative records maintained by the substantive institutions such as police, prosecution, courts, prison and other agencies. Such data are closely linked to national criminal legal systems, which define offences and identify the institutions responsible for law enforcement and criminal justice. These data are a by-product of complex procedures put in place by States to enforce criminal law and to ensure that offences, offenders and victims are properly considered by criminal justice systems. In general, statistical requirements do not have priority in the design of crime-recording systems and several challenges need to be addressed to produce high-quality statistical data based on these systems. Administrative data on crime do not reflect only the underlying trends and patterns in crime but also the effectiveness of the various State institutions responsible. Among all forms of

[1] See, for example, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, resolution 19/2 on strengthening the collection, analysis and reporting of comparable crime-related data (E/2010/30, chap. I.D).

statistics on crime that are based on administrative reporting, police data typically represent the closest approximation to the actual extent of crime, while data provided by criminal justice bodies (prosecutors, courts, prisons, etc.) describe the modalities and efficacy of the State response to crime. In all cases, the data emanating from criminal justice systems reflect only the offences that are detected or reported to the authorities, while undetected and unreported crime remains unmeasured.

4. More recently, victimization surveys have emerged as one of the important pillars of crime statistics. Victimization surveys are an important tool to collect information on a number of highly relevant aspects that administrative statistics cannot cover. These include the characteristics of victims, the impact of crime on victims, perceptions of crime and attitudes towards the police and other agencies. In addition, victimization surveys can capture the portion of crimes that are not reported to the police and that consequently are not measured in administrative statistics. Victimization surveys can therefore assist in building a more comprehensive picture of the levels and patterns of crime in a country. In some countries, these surveys have been incorporated into the regular national survey programmes and are considered instrumental in providing reference information on crime and designing evidence-based criminal justice policies; in others, they are carried out by local governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or research institutions with only a limited impact on the leading national crime policy programmes.

5. Given the complex system of actors and data sources that are involved in crime statistics, there is a need to have a greater involvement of national statistical offices in the development and maintenance of a coordinated and comprehensive system of crime and criminal justice statistics. The main role of the national statistical offices can be summarized as follows:

6. **Coordination**. As the coordinator of national statistical systems, the national statistical office is often best placed to exercise an institutional mandate to conduct a coordinated dialogue among the statistical entities of the different institutions (in particular, police, prosecution, court and prisons). The core aspects of such coordination may include: (a) the development of statistical standard definitions and concepts to be applied across all institutions; (b) the design of improved statistical methodology; (c) technical support to individual agencies; and (d) the dissemination of crime statistics integrating data from various institutions and data sources. The coordinating role of the national statistical office becomes even more crucial in countries where the competence of the crime and criminal justice system is organized at different levels, typically state and federal. In these situations, data collections based on administrative records are usually structured according to the competences of the various institutions (state and federal), posing an additional challenge to the task of producing summary data for the entire country.

7. **Enhancement of quality standards**. Information based on crime statistics can have strong political implications; therefore, the collection, analysis and dissemination of crime data should be based on the highest quality standards. Important elements are professional independence, transparency, statistical confidentiality, impartiality and objectivity. While these aspects are not a monopoly of the national statistical office, the office can have an important role to advocate and strengthen, where needed, the quality components of the single institutions that

manage the administrative statistics. Enhancing also its role to collect, standardize and disseminate the data from all relevant institutions, the national statistical office can better enforce standards in the releasing of data with modalities that are independent from the political process.

8. **Implementation of victimization surveys**. The value of victimization surveys has been increasingly recognized by policymakers and today they represent in some countries the key source of information for monitoring crime policies. Victimization surveys are carried out in a wide range of countries, with different implementation modalities: within national statistical systems or as part of research programmes; covering the entire national territory or only selected urban or rural areas; and with a regular time frame or on an ad hoc basis. National statistical offices have increasingly been involved in victimization surveys either as the main responsible agency defining content, methodology and implementing modalities or as the "field" agency defining only the implementing modalities. Despite the increasing role of surveys in the general understanding of crime, victimization surveys still remain in many countries an activity that is outside national statistical systems. National statistical offices can play a better role in integrating these surveys into the regular survey programme of official statistics. Depending on how a national statistical system is articulated, national statistical offices can cooperate with substantive agencies, research organizations and civil society and contribute at different levels, from the provision of technical advice and the development of sound methodology to becoming the active promoter and implementer of victimization surveys. As the coordinator of official statistics, the national statistical office should also be proactive in ensuring that victimization surveys are considered when statistical master programmes are developed. Considering the utilization of surveys to collect data on crime within the broader prospective of national statistical plans brings more flexibility and efficiency and, for example, allows the inclusion of victimization modules in existing surveys, where appropriate. A regular annual programme of victimization surveys is currently institutionalized within the framework of official statistics in some countries, such as Australia, Canada, Chile, Mexico, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Many other countries implement victimization surveys within the framework of official statistics with a longer time frame (for example, every five years) or on an ad hoc basis. An inventory of victimization surveys carried out by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) under the auspices of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) in the 56 ECE member States in 2006, revealed that over the past three decades, 23 countries had implemented specialized victimization surveys and an additional 16 countries had added a module on victimization in existing surveys. As victimization surveys become more widely adopted, the desire to use them for international comparative purposes has increased over the years.

Box 1
Initiatives developed to standardize victimization surveys

Programme	*Description*	*Reference for more information*
International Crime Victimization Survey	The International Crime Victimization Survey was developed in 1987 to provide a standard questionnaire and overcome differences in crime definition and survey methodology. Initially focusing on developed countries, with the involvement of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the surveys increasingly expanded to developing countries. By 2006, more than 70 countries had carried out at least one survey.	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_International_Crime_Victims_Survey
European Union Safety and Security Survey	The European Union Safety and Security Survey is coordinated by Eurostat and aims to implement in the year 2013 a fully harmonized European Union victimization survey in all 27 European Union member States, plus additional European countries.	http://arno.uvt.nl/show.cgi?fid=113047
Regional System of Standardized Citizen Security and Violence Prevention Indicators	The "Regional System of Standardized Citizen Security and Violence Prevention Indicators" project is coordinated by the Institute Cisalva of the University of Cali (Colombia) and supported by the Inter-American Development Bank. About 15 countries from Central and South America and the Caribbean participate in this project and have developed a core survey module.	http://bprindicadoresbid.univalle.edu.co/proyect.html

III. Challenges faced by countries on crime statistics

9. A number of advancements have been made in crime and criminal justice statistics and today more and better information is available at the national level to support crime prevention policies. Some countries have made considerable progress in improving national coordination, strengthening recording systems, developing survey methodology to measure crime and enhancing analytical capacity so as to

make crime statistics meaningful in the context of policy. However, there are still challenges that limit the ability of countries to develop national comprehensive and coordinated crime and criminal justice statistical systems. Many of the challenges relate to the lack of technical and financial resources of relevant agencies, which translates into the struggle of institutions such as police, courts, prosecution and penal systems to develop or maintain efficient, comprehensive, coordinated and fully computerized recording systems. However, there are also institutional challenges. The presence of different institutions dedicated to law enforcement such as police, gendarmerie, customs, financial police and the different institutional levels of criminal codes (distinguishing federal- and state-level crime) make it more difficult for countries to construct an integrated data system that can cover all offences for an entire country.

10. Similarly, the capacity of countries to implement victimization surveys varies across countries and regions. In Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand there is a general understanding of the value of the data collected from victims, and a number of countries have established national victimization survey programmes. In South America, there is a long tradition to monitor crime and there are a number of crime observatories at the city, regional and national levels, where population-based surveys are among the tools used in developing crime prevention policies. However, some of these surveys only partially cover the national territory and do not have sustainability over time. Victimization surveys are not a rooted practice in many of the countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, where crime statistics are often solely confined to data related to the crimes reported to the authorities.

Box 2
Crime statistics in Mexico

The example from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI) shows that national statistical offices can have an important role in enhancing the national coherence of crime data, as it has taken an integral approach to the production of statistics on crime, both assuming the role of coordinator of the statistical activities of all Government agencies and increasing its role as direct producer of statistics.

In the past few years, INEGI has systematized all the projects concerning the production of statistical information on crime and other related data through various Government censuses, victimization and perception surveys and the improvement of administrative records. It has developed a standard classification to collect administrative data on crime from all national and subnational institutions. For the first time, Mexico can provide reliable national data on victimization (criminal incidence and prevalence), the dark figure, perception and institutional evaluation referred to the federal, state and municipal levels. In addition, information on Government resources, performance and justice and prosecution has become available.

11. There are different reasons that can explain the weak engagement of some national statistical offices in crime and criminal justice statistics:

(a) Other national institutions such as the ministry of the interior or the police department have developed a strong research and statistical component and are in a better position to lead data collection and dissemination activities;

(b) Crime-related data are seen as a matter to be managed only by institutions that are designated to prevent or fight crime and the role of national statistical offices is not perceived as relevant by the office itself or by policymakers;

(c) There is a shortage of resources that can be devoted to the area of crime in national statistical offices, which can affect their capacity to establish a leading position and to effectively exercise a coordinating role.

12. A number of initiatives have been implemented to support countries in the development of crime and criminal justice statistics. International organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme have provided training on the recording, compilation and use of crime and criminal justice data as part of their global efforts to enhance the quality of governance. As mandated by the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has developed standards and guidelines on crime and criminal justice statistics.[2] The Office has also provided more direct support through projects providing assessments and training for the development of crime and criminal justice statistics.[3] In many countries, the Office provides methodological support to States in the development of their crime and criminal justice statistics systems as well as in the conduct of victimization surveys. Over the past five years, for example, the Office has supported a series of crime victimization surveys in seven African countries in its "Data for Africa" programme, including Cape Verde (2008), Egypt (2008), Ghana (2009), Kenya (2010), Rwanda (2008), Uganda (2007) and the United Republic of Tanzania (2008).[4]

[2] Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/25, entitled "Improving the collection, reporting and analysis of data to enhance knowledge on trends in specific areas of crime".

[3] A recent example includes a two-year project funded by the European Union and implemented between 2009 and 2011 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime with a number of partners that aimed to strengthen monitoring instruments for judicial and law enforcement institutions in the countries of the western Balkans by bringing national statistical mechanisms into compliance with relevant international standards and good practices.

[4] The results of the crime victimization surveys are available from www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/Data-for-Africa-publications.html. The surveys used a standard questionnaire that was adapted, as necessary, to reflect local needs and understanding of crime and justice concepts.

Box 3
Areas where countries need assistance

In order to improve the capacity of countries to develop and maintain a relevant, coherent and comprehensive crime statistics system, there is the need to focus on different areas:

- Promote the idea that national statistical offices can be more involved in the collection and coordination of crime and criminal justice statistics and support an ongoing dialogue between the national statistical office and other national institutions engaged in the recording and processing of crime-related data in order to maximize the provision and the analysis of data
- Strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices to be more engaged in the field of crime statistics and develop statistical standards, provide technical support to individual agencies and coordinate the dissemination of data
- Promote the implementation of victimization surveys within the framework of national statistical systems
- Provide technical support to national statistical offices to design and implement national victimization surveys with a wide consultation with relevant stakeholders
- Support institutions that record crime and criminal justice events to bring their statistical systems in line with international standards and best practices, to strengthen their recording and data collection capacities (e.g., through computerizing their systems) and to enhance their analytical competencies for producing high quality outputs.

13. Recently, INEGI and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime established the first Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information on Governance, Victims of Crime, Public Security and Justice, with the objective of supporting countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region to implement victimization surveys and improve the role of national statistical offices in crime statistics. The Centre is also a forum where research is undertaken to develop new statistical methodology and where experts can draw up guidelines on how to measure the crime-related phenomena that are most relevant for the countries in the region and the international community.

Box 4
INEGI-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information

The Centre is located in Mexico City and Aguascalientes and focuses on the production and analysis of statistical information on government, crime, victimization and justice to achieve the following objectives:

- To develop institutional capacities for statistical production
- To support countries in the development of victimization surveys
- To provide training and technical assistance
- To create a network of experts in the production and analysis of statistics on government, crime, victimization and justice
- To conduct research and trend analysis
- To promote crime classification in the region

IV. International standards on crime statistics

14. The provision of international standards can support the collection, dissemination and analysis of crime and criminal justice statistics by making data across countries more comparable and providing guidelines to countries on how to design and maintain data-collection systems. In the area of crime and operations of criminal justice systems, it is particularly challenging to promote comparable indicators across different jurisdictions, because administrative statistics on crime and criminal justice are based on national (penal) legislation and different legal definitions. In addition, procedures for data collection, recording practices and counting rules differ widely among countries. The capacities of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies to produce good quality statistics also varies widely, as many countries lack the resources to ensure effective coordination and the employment of staff trained in record-keeping and statistical data production.

15. While there are no binding international standards for the production of crime statistics, the United Nations has long promoted a set of widely recognized guidelines for crime and criminal justice statistics and has recognized the central role of national statistical offices in coordinating the production of such statistics. The *Manual for the Development of a System of Criminal Justice Statistics*[5] provides detailed guidelines on organizational options and the scope and content of a system of criminal justice statistics encompassing police, prosecution, court and prison data and offers valuable guidance on the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of such statistics. Regarding victimization surveys, the joint ECE/United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime *Manual on Victimization Surveys* provides detailed guidance on the full cycle of implementing a victimization survey, from planning, design, methodology and questionnaire design, to data processing,

[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.XVII.6.

dissemination and survey evaluation. At the regional level, ongoing statistical initiatives (such as those of the European Union) facilitate the adoption of common standards and definitions, as detailed in the 2010 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime report, *Developing Standards in Justice and Home Affairs Statistics — International and EU Acquis*.

16. CES has embarked on an effort to define a framework for a common crime classification system and established in 2009 a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime/ECE Task Force on Crime Classification. The Task Force has developed a framework that categorizes all criminal acts and events on the basis of "events" rather than (widely different) legal definitions, allowing for meaningful comparisons of statistics on crime and criminal justice. The Bureau of CES has approved the preliminary work of the Task Force, which lays down the principles for an international crime classification for statistical proposes (framework classification of crime) consisting of three categorization levels and a number of additional horizontal attributes. CES has extended the mandate of the Task Force until the end of 2012 and has tasked it with further developing the framework classification of crime by preparing additional case studies and further classifying selected criminal offences. The work carried out by CES and its Task Force is very promising and some CES countries have indicated that they could map their data into the developed framework. It would be important for the testing and the developmental work for the classification to be extended to other regions outside Europe to ensure its wider applicability. The INEGI-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information has included in its work programme the testing of the framework classification of crime, in the Latin American region. It is hoped that other regions engage in similar initiatives and that the Statistical Commission closely monitors the development of the classification.

17. In the Sixth Meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, which took place from 16 to 18 November 2011 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, the challenges that national statistical offices face when measuring crime statistics were analysed and there was a presentation of the work of the INEGI-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Centre of Excellence.

18. The Conference adopted a recommendation to support countries' efforts to produce and disseminate information on crime, in particular through the inclusion of victimization surveys in the regular programme of national statistical offices. The Conference requested international organizations to promote international standards for the implementation of victimization surveys and the development of crime classifications. It also welcomed the establishment of the Centre of Excellence and asked that it support countries' efforts to produce statistics on the subject and that it develop standards for the measurement of crime.

19. The Conference requested the Statistical Commission to include the issue of crime statistics in its regular programme of work.[6]

20. In terms of data collection and dissemination at the international level, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is the mandated organization that regularly collects data on crime and criminal justice. As the global body tasked to promote effective responses to crime, drugs and terrorism, including through the

[6] Resolution 7 (VI), para. 50, available at http://www.eclac.cl/deype/noticias/noticias/5/44535/SCA6_Resolution7VI.pdf

provision of knowledge, statistical data and analysis, the Office is mandated to carry out a regular data collection on administrative crime and criminal justice among Member States through the United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems. Implemented since the early 1970s, the Survey is currently conducted annually and includes a core set of modules that are repeated annually as well as special one-off modules focusing on specific crime issues. The structure of the Survey was adopted by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. In order to support countries in increasing the quality, availability and cross-country comparability of the data provided, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provides advisory services and special training sessions to requesting countries. In addition, the establishment of a network of national contact points for statistics on crime and criminal justice is an important step towards raising the volume and quality of responses to the Survey. In only a few countries, the national contact point nominated by the national authority is located within the national statistical office. On the regional level, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime collaborates closely with regional organizations, such as the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) and the Organization of American States, in the harmonization of data-collection instruments and in the collection of responses to the Survey from States. Data collected by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime are disseminated through the Web and publications where data are analysed in order to provide in-depth knowledge on specific topics. The most recent publication is the *2011 Global Study on Homicide: Trends, Contexts, Data*.[7]

V. Emerging and difficult-to-measure crimes

21. In addition to valid and comparable measures of conventional crime, official statistics are increasingly expected to provide reliable measures to improve knowledge on more complex and emerging forms of crime, such as trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants, trafficking in environmental resources, cybercrime, money-laundering and corruption. The measurement of such crimes presents additional challenges rooted in the nature of the offences, their wide range and their transnational nature. The operations behind these crimes are very sophisticated and the crimes are difficult to detect and are sometimes without an individual victim. These forms of crime are often perpetrated by organized criminal groups and the broad measurement of organized crime is itself a challenging task for official statistical agencies at the country and international levels.

22. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime provides the basis and some important concepts that can be used to build a framework for measuring organized crime, such as for setting criteria to define organized criminal groups, at both the national and transnational levels. Further work is, however, needed to develop operational criteria to measure organized crime and to identify statistical data and relevant sources. A reference in this sense is also provided by the Convention, which explicitly states that in article 28 "common definitions, standards and methodologies should be developed and applied as appropriate".

[7] Available from http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/crime/global-study-on-homicide-2011.html.

Box 5
Examples of emerging and difficult to measure crime

- Trafficking in persons
- Smuggling of migrants
- Trafficking in environmental resources
- Cybercrime
- Money-laundering
- Corruption

23. A comprehensive framework for measuring organized crime should explicitly address the offences related to participation in organized groups as well as the different manifestations of organized crime in other offences (such as homicides). This implies, for example, that data-collection systems based on recorded crimes need to be adapted to flag those crimes that are committed by organized groups so that the measurement of organized crime becomes more realistic.

24. The same challenge exists for other complex forms of crime that may not be related to organized crime, such as the smuggling of migrants, money-laundering, cybercrime and corruption. Some work has been carried out to develop statistical standards and produce data for several of such crimes, at both the national and international levels. For example, in 2010 Eurostat produced a first review of data and indicators on money-laundering at the European Union level.[8] This pioneering work, requested by the European Commission, identified a number of concrete challenges to collecting data and building indicators in this field.

25. Corruption represents another area where there is an increasing demand for quantitative measures. Assessments of the level of corruption have been produced at both the national and international levels over the past decades. However, many such assessments — which are often based on indirect methods or perception-driven — present major weaknesses from a methodological point of view. More recently, the undertaking of sample surveys[9] focusing on direct experiences of corruption by the population or businesses have shown that solid and evidence-based data on corruption can be produced. However, there is no consolidated methodology to produce reliable and standardized measurements of corruption and the various approaches tested to date have not been translated into a standard statistical apparatus (concepts, survey methods and tools, indicators).

26. A number of steps are needed to enhance the measurement of these complex and highly relevant forms of crime. Building on what has already been done,

[8] Eurostat, *Money laundering in Europe, Report of work carried out by Eurostat and DG Home Affairs*, (Luxembourg, 2010)

[9] An example is represented by the coordinated corruption surveys implemented in 2010 by the countries (in many cases national statistical offices) in the Balkans with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the European Union (http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/corruption/Western_balkans_corruption_report_2011_web.pdf).

methodological work is required to define the parameters for the measures and for identifying how traditional data-collection systems (administrative records or surveys) can be modified in order to better identify and record these forms of crime. Given the transnational nature of most of these phenomena and the need to measure flows across countries and regions, it is important that international standards are developed in a way that national data can be easily compared and linked.

27. This comes from the existence of international legal instruments, such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, in which countries have already expressed a strong commitment to work together and which provide the basis for any measurement exercise.

VI. International Conference on Crime Statistics

28. While several scientific events on crime research are held at the academic and governmental levels, the international statistical system lacks opportunities to exchange practices and discuss statistical standards on crime. More broadly, the international statistical system needs to reflect on how crime statistics can be better incorporated into national statistical systems and how to promote the role of national statistical offices in crime and criminal justice statistics. To that end the INEGI-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information will organize the first International Conference on Government, Crime, Victimization and Justice Statistics, to be held in Aguascalientes, Mexico, from 22 to 25 May 2012. The Conference aims to become a regular forum for the discussion and analysis of statistical information on the subject matters. It will gather official statisticians, academics, researchers and members of NGOs, as well as officials who use statistical information and are responsible for formulating and implementing public policies. The Conference will promote exchange of information among data producers and facilitate dialogue with the many users of crime data with a view to enhancing the quality of statistical information in this field.[10]

VII. Conclusions

29. The increased concern of the public and policymakers on security and good governance is demanding more and better statistics on crime and criminal justice, particularly in those areas where citizens and Government institutions are more affected. National statistical offices can play an active role in this process. The full involvement of national statistical offices can be highly beneficial for the enhancement of national crime statistics systems by coordinating and providing methodological support to national institutions (including police, prosecution, courts and prisons) and by raising the quality of crime statistics through the implementation of professional and independence standards. National statistical offices are also well positioned to promote sustainable programmes of victimization surveys at the country level. The conduct of victimization surveys, be it in the form

[10] For further information visit www.cdeunodc.inegi.org.mx.

of ad hoc surveys or survey modules, should become part of the regular planning of statistical surveys implemented by national statistical offices.

30. Several countries need technical and financial support to upgrade their crime statistics system. In the sphere of administrative data on crime, assistance is needed to produce consistent statistics across the various bodies involved in law enforcement and criminal justice systems, especially where there are different levels of competence across jurisdictions. Technical assistance is also needed to promote and implement victimization surveys, especially where national statistical offices do not have a well-established role in the field of crime statistics. The INEGI-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information can provide an important role in supporting countries in the region and at the global level in improving their capacity to collect, disseminate and analyse crime data. It can also support the development of new statistical guidelines and standards through research and testing of methodology and expert consultation.

31. The development of international standards in the field of crime statistics needs to continue in order to support countries to produce comparable data and set firmer bases for national data production. The framework classification of crime jointly developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and ECE, under the auspices of CES, represents a solid basis for developing an international classification of crime through a broad and comprehensive participation process. This effort should be expanded to other regions and should be monitored by the Statistical Commission and the international statistical system.

32. Further methodological work at the international level is needed to produce statistical measures of several complex crimes, such as trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants, trafficking in environmental resources, cybercrime, money-laundering and corruption. In these areas, statistical standards are at their early stage and guidance at the international level is needed to develop measures on these crimes, especially in the context of transnational organized crime.

33. An international conference on crime statistics could provide a forum to advocate for an improved contribution of national statistical offices to the development of crime statistics at the national and international levels and could represent a valuable opportunity to regularly reflect on the development of standards in crime statistics and address the emerging challenges of measurement and analysis.

VIII. Points for discussion

34. **The Commission may wish to:**

(a) **Recommend an improved involvement of national statistical offices in the coordination of administrative and survey-based crime statistics at the national level while acknowledging the role of other national institutions, such as ministries of the interior and justice, in continuing to maintain and analyse crime data;**

(b) **Invite national statistical offices to promote national victimization surveys and include such surveys in their regular data production;**

(c) Encourage the international community to support countries to implement victimization surveys within the framework of official statistics and to improve registration systems;

(d) Improve the quality and availability of crime statistics at the international level, through: (i) the testing of the draft framework classification of crime, building on the work of the CES; and (ii) better coordination between the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to ensure the better quality and availability of the data disseminated at the international level;

(e) Acknowledge the establishment of the INEGI-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information and ask the Centre to support countries to strengthen the quality and availability of crime statistics through various activities, including technical assistance and the testing of methodology to measure emerging and "difficult-to-measure" crimes;

(f) Request the INEGI-United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Centre of Excellence to organize in 2012 the first international conference on crime statistics.